

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections contained in the Office Action of December 1, 2004 is respectfully requested.

In order to make necessary editorial corrections, the entire specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised. As the revisions are quite extensive, the amendments to the specification and abstract have been incorporated into the attached substitute specification and abstract. For the Examiner's benefit, a marked-up copy of the specification indicating the changes made thereto is also enclosed. No new matter has been added by the revisions. Entry of the substitute specification is thus respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to the drawings because the "curved sloped face" of original dependent claim 7 was not illustrated in any of the drawings. In view of this objection, new formal Figure 13 has been prepared and submitted herewith, and the new Figure clearly illustrates the curved slope face of the present invention (indicated by new reference number 41). It is submitted that the subject matter illustrated in new formal Figure 13 was clearly disclosed in original dependent claim 7, as well as on page 21, lines 21-25 of the original specification. In view of the submission of the new Figure, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's objection to the drawings has been overcome.

The Examiner objected to claims 1, 6, and 7 due to various informalities, and rejected elected claims 1 and 5-7 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the Examiner asserted that the claims contained numerous occurrences of vague language that render the scope of the claims indefinite. In view of these formal objections and rejections, all of the original claims 1-16 have been cancelled and replaced with new claims 17-36. The new claims have been carefully drafted so as to address the Examiner's formal objections and rejections, and so as to fully comply with all of the requirements of 35 USC § 112. Furthermore, it is submitted that new claims 17-27 and 32-36 read on elected Species I. In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's formal objections and rejections of the original claims have been overcome.

The Examiner rejected original elected claims 1 and 5-7 under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by the Iwasaki reference (USP 6,643,100); rejected claims 1 and 6 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Kuroda reference (USP 5,299,079); and rejected claim 7 as being unpatentable over the Kuroda reference. However, as indicated above, the original claims have now been cancelled and replaced with new claims 17-36, including new independent claims 17 and 32. For the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that the new claims are clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

As an initial matter, as the Examiner stated in the outstanding Office Action, the Iwasaki reference qualifies as prior art under 35 USC § 102(e), and has an effective date (i.e., a U.S. filing date) of August 21, 2001. However, as indicated in the Declaration submitted with the present application, the priority date of the present application is December 7, 2000, which is well before the effective date of the Iwasaki reference. As indicated by the Examiner in Item 9 of the outstanding Office Action, however, the Applicants had not yet submitted a verified English translation of the priority documents at the time the Office Action was mailed, although a certified copy of the priority document was filed on December 6, 2001. Thus, the Examiner's attention is now directed to the verified English translation of the priority document submitted herewith. In view of this submission, the Examiner is respectfully submitted to withdraw the Iwasaki reference in accordance with MPEP § 201.15.

New independent claim 17 is directed to a head slider that comprises a front surface including *a flotation improving section* arranged to confront a positive pressure generating section of the front surface. A negative pressure generating recess is located *between* the positive pressure generating section and the flotation improving section. A head is fixed *at a downstream side of the flotation improving section*, and a slope face of the front surface is located *at both lateral sides of the head*.

The Kuroda reference is directed to a flying head slider including a slider body 11 with control grooves 19 formed therein. The head slider also includes a pair of parallel rails 12, and the parallel rails 12 and grooves 19 include sloped faces 17, 22, respectively. However, the flying head slider of the Kuroda reference does not disclose or even suggest a *flotation improving section* confronting a positive pressure generating section, and thus also does not disclose a negative

pressure generating recess that is located *between* a positive pressure generating section and the *flotation improving section*. Although the Kuroda reference discloses a magnetic head 15, the head is clearly not fixed at a downstream side of a *flotation improving section*. Finally, the Kuroda reference does not disclose or even suggest a sloped face *at both lateral sides of the head 15*. Therefore, it is submitted that the Kuroda reference clearly does not anticipate the invention recited in new independent claim 17. Moreover, in view of the lack of teaching of the features discussed above, it is submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not even be motivated to modify the Kuroda reference so as to obtain the invention recited in new independent claim 17. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that new independent claim 17 and the claims that depend therefrom are clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

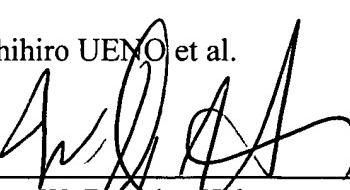
New independent claim 32 is directed to a disk drive comprising a head slider, and the head slider includes all of the features recited in new independent claim 17. Therefore, for the reasons discussed above with respect to new independent claim 17, it is submitted that new independent claim 32 and the claims that depend therefrom are also clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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